

REMARKS

Claims 1-31 are presently pending. Claims 1, 11, and 21 have been amended. Therefore, claims 1-31 remain pending in the present application.

Request for Continued Examination

The Applicants are concurrently filing a Request for Continued Examination ("RCE") that accompanies this response.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §§ 102/103

Claims 1, 2, 4-5, 8-12, 16-19, 21-25, and 29 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0130033 to Loose ("Loose"). Claims 3 and 31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Loose in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,648,757 to Slomiany et al. Claim 7 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Loose in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,876,284 to Acres et al. Claims 13-15 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Loose in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0186739 to Paulsen et al. Claims 26-28 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being obvious over Loose. The Applicants respectfully request that the Examiner reconsider and withdraw these rejections in light of the amendments to the claims and the following remarks.

Personal Interview and Interview Summary

The Applicants note with appreciation the interview with the Applicants' representatives, Jeremie Moll and Wayne Tang, and Examiners D'Agostino and Hotaling on October 18, 2007. Pursuant to the discussions in the interview, the Applicants have amended independent claims 1, 11, and 21 to clarify the invention.

The Applicants agree with the Interview Summary Sheet provided at the end of the interview in which the Examiners acknowledged that, in light of the proposed amendments made to claims 1 and 11, the Examiners agreed to revisit the disclosure of Loose.

The Applicants submit that the present specification provides support for the element of claim 1 that states, "said termination indicating to said player that there is no longer a probability of said bonus award being awarded on said first gaming machine". For example, Paragraph 0026 of

the present specification states, “The visual bonus indicator 28 is an indicator to a player of a gaming machine that a probability exists of being awarded a bonus award.” It follows then that the absence or termination of the visual bonus indicator indicates that there is *no* probability of being awarded a bonus award. Further support is provided at Paragraph 0007, which states, “Bonuses awarded in connection with visual bonus indicators on gaming machines may be awarded in connection with bonus award symbols *left on gaming machines . . .*” (emphasis added). Thus, it can be inferred that gaming machines not having visual bonus indicators left thereon (e.g., gaming machines in which display of the visual bonus indicator was terminated) have no probability of being awarded a bonus award. Moreover, Paragraph 0029 states, “The sequential movement of the visual bonus indicator 28 from one display to a contiguous display . . . can provide an incentive for players to play gaming machines that the visual bonus indicator 28 *appears to be heading toward*” (emphasis added), which implies that a player would not have an incentive to play a gaming machine on which display of the visual bonus indicator has terminated because no probability exists that a bonus award will be awarded on that gaming machine. Thus, for at least these reasons, the Applicants respectfully submit that the element “said termination indicating to said player that there is no longer a probability of said bonus award being awarded on said first gaming machine” is supported by the present specification.

Claim 21 has been amended to include elements similar to those included in amended claims 1 and/or 11 and discussed during the October 18 interview. Thus, the Applicants believe that claim 21, as amended, is allowable for at least the same reasons as discussed during the interview of October 18 regarding claims 1 and 11.

Independent Claims 1, 11, and 21

Independent claim 1 has been amended to clarify that the displaying indicates to a player “that a probability exists of a bonus award being awarded on said first gaming machine”. Claim 1 has been further amended to include displaying at least a portion of the visual bonus indicator on the second display of the second gaming machine, the displaying indicating to a player that a probability exists of a bonus award being awarded on the second gaming machine. Claim 1 has been further amended to include “displaying said visual bonus indicator in its entirety on said second display of said second gaming machine”. Claim 1 has been further amended to include “terminating said display of said visual bonus indicator on said first display, said termination

indicating to said player that there is no longer a probability of the bonus award being awarded on said first gaming machine”.

Independent claim 11 has been amended to clarify that the displaying of the visual bonus indicator on the first gaming machine indicates to a player “a likelihood of a bonus award being awarded on said first gaming machine”. Claim 11 has been further amended to clarify that the terminating the display of the visual bonus indicator on the first display of the first gaming machine indicates to said player of said first gaming machine “that no probability exists of said bonus award being awarded on said first gaming machine”. Claim 11 has been further amended to clarify that the displaying of the visual bonus indicator on a second display of the second gaming machine indicates to the player of the second gaming machine “that a probability exists of a bonus award being awarded on said second gaming machine”. Claim 11 has been further modified to clarify that the second bonus is awarded to the player of the second gaming machine “while said visual bonus indicator is displayed on said second display of said second gaming machine.”

Claim 21 has been amended to clarify that “said visual bonus indicator [is] further adapted to terminate display of said visual bonus indicator on said certain ones of said displays”. Claim 21 has been further amended to clarify that the “terminating display of said visual bonus indicator indicat[es] to said player that there is no longer a probability of said bonus award being awarded on said gaming machine upon which it was displayed”.

As explained in the interview, Loose does not disclose the features set forth in amended claims 1, 11, and 21. Loose discloses methods for “attracting players to gaming machines.” Loose, *inter alia*, p. 1, para. 3, p. 2, para. 0013. Nowhere does Loose disclose displaying visual indicators to indicate to a player that a probability exists of a bonus award being awarded on a particular machine. Furthermore, Loose does not disclose terminating the display of the visual bonus indicator to indicate to the player that there is no longer a probability of the bonus awarded being awarded on the gaming machine.

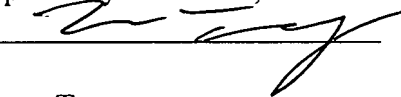
Accordingly, the Applicants believe that independent claims 1, 11, and 21 are allowable. Claims 2-10, 12-20, and 22-31, which depend on claims 1, 11, or 21, are believed to be allowable for at least the same reasons.

Conclusion

It is the Applicants' belief that all of the claims are now in condition for allowance and action towards that effect is respectfully requested. The Applicants respectfully request that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. If there are any matters that may be resolved or clarified through a telephone interview, the Examiner is requested to contact the undersigned attorney at the number indicated.

A check for \$810.00 covering the RCE is being submitted herewith. The Commissioner is authorized to deduct any other fee that may be required (except the issue fee) to Nixon Peabody LLP, Deposit Account No. 50-4181, Order No. 247079-000237USPT. A duplicate copy of this paper is enclosed.

Dated: October 25, 2007

Respectfully submitted,
By 

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